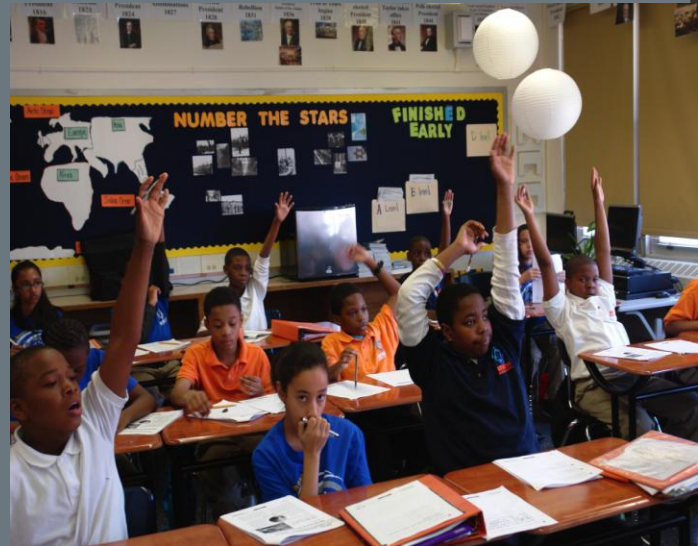


Our school is part of a community, called iZone360, which is reimagining the traditional school model in order to address the needs, strengths, and motivations of each student.



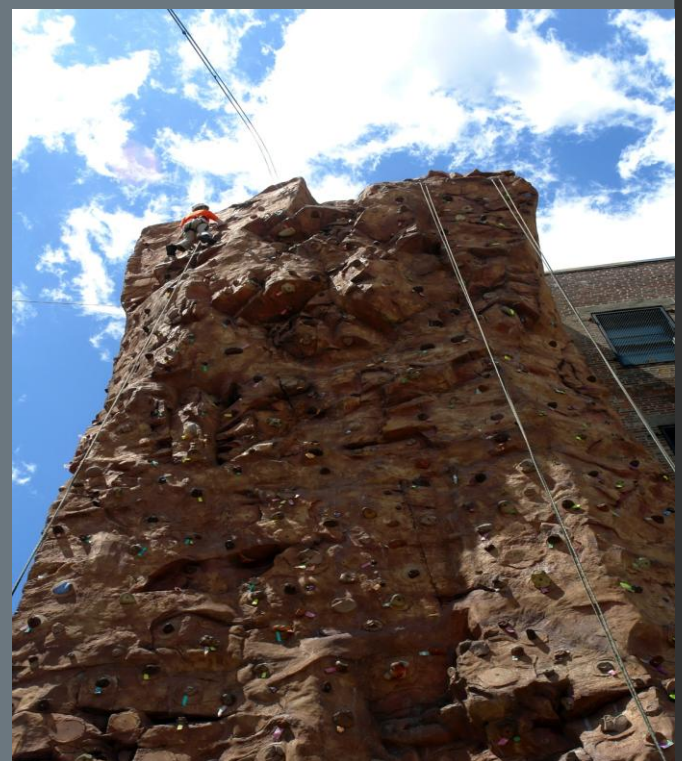
Why We Need to Innovate

Our mission at Baychester Middle School is to provide all students with an education that prepares them to succeed in college. We believe students learn best when they are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and are given explicit pathways towards growth. We are innovating to provide more individualized and personalized learning time and to give students all the information they need to make choices about their learning. Additionally, we are providing them with real world learning environments and tools that they will need for college and career success.



A New Approach to School

We have an approach to learning that recognizes and nurtures social, organizational, and emotional skills, as well as academic. We are providing students with more than a grade. We are providing them with specific skills information and then teaching them to use flexible time and resources to grow. We are using real world tools and environments (like field trips, email, coffee shop/study hall, and training camp time) to help students learn how to learn, when to ask for help, and how to make positive, self-sufficient choices about their time and resources.



How can we reimagine and transform curriculum and assessment to help all students meet or exceed the Common Core Standards and other rigorous academic standards?

The Common Core State Standards require students to develop long term skills that transfer across content areas. Students need to intrinsically understand concepts rather than memorize facts and formulas. We see the reforms around the Common Core as a pathway to helping students learn how to be effective life long learners. This means making effective habits of learning transparent and giving them clear and consistent feedback on their progress towards mastering these habits. It is also a reason to expand our former notions about what students learn in school – not just reading and writing but how to organize their own time, how to ask for and offer help, and how to use technology responsibly and resourcefully. Our students work in their advisories to reflect on their progress and create personalized learning plans. Then they are given time within the school day to work independently or as part of a small group to hone those skills. Our primary focus is that students leave our middle school with the resiliency and tools they need to advocate for themselves and succeed in any high school or college environment.

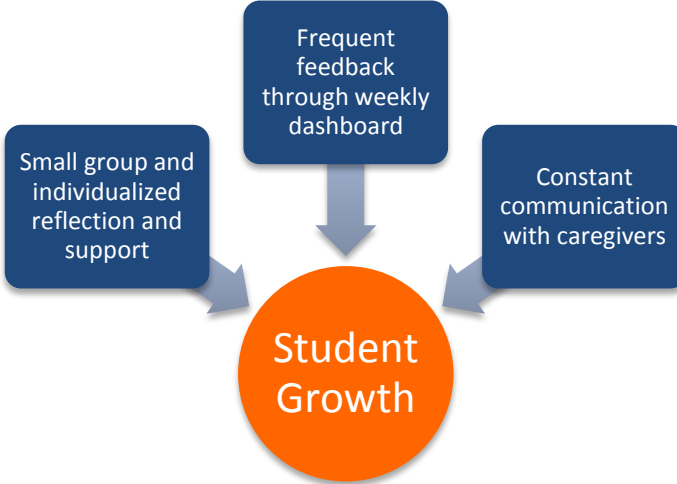
How do curriculum and assessments need to change to prepare students for dynamic and demanding colleges, careers, and communities?

If we expand our ideas about what students learn in schools to lifelong skills like communication, organization and self-advocacy, we also have to expand and reform the way we assess students. Baychester Middle School provides students with data on their progress in all areas of learning. Teachers provide frequent feedback on small group discussion skills, on personalized learning plans, and on effective organization habits through our advisory program. Our content areas focus on building and assessing transferrable life skills.



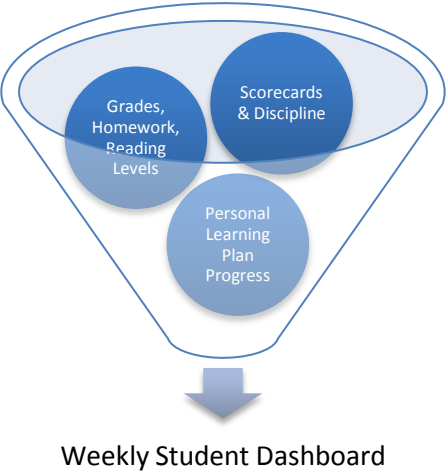
How can students work together with staff and their families to create a personalized learning plan that helps them reach mastery at their own pace?

Baychester Middle School has built a comprehensive dashboard that gives students information on their progress towards mastering lifelong learning skills. The individualized dashboard will include information on homework and work habits, social and behavior habits, organization patterns, as well as grades and reading levels. Students will work weekly with their advisors to reflect on their work and progress with the support of an advisor and small group of peers. There is also flexible learning time available for students to practice techniques that might help them improve in small groups or individually.



How can students receive frequent and detailed feedback on their progress toward mastery?

Students will receive a variety of feedback on a weekly basis including their grades in each class, their scorecard data that tracks effective habits of learning, their reading level and words read for each week, and their progress on their learning plan. Students will reflect on this feedback in a small group and one-on-one with an advisor. Students will follow up with teachers and peers to continue to grow each week. Families will also receive a copy of the dashboard each week so they can provide support at home.



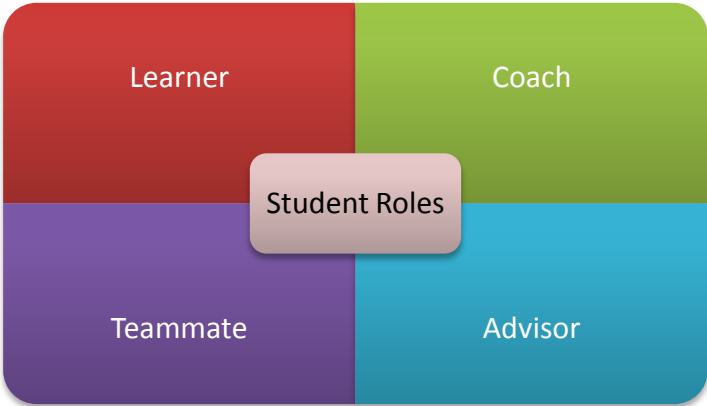
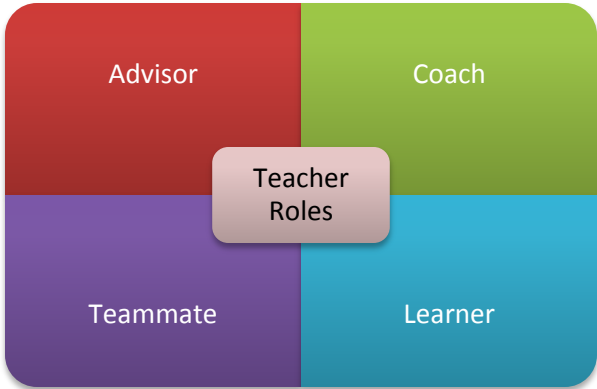
How will students take ownership of their learning and learn how to work in a variety of live and virtual settings?

Students will be equipped with detailed information and a scaffolded reflection process to begin to be in charge of their own learning. In training camp, students will be given time and resources to work on their own personalized learning plan in a blended environment. Students at Baychester also learn how to research without plagiarizing and how to manage their own time. Baychester Middle School will provide an after school “coffee shop” where students can work on homework, catch up on reading, or work together on a project.



How will staff take on new, flexible roles as coaches and facilitators to guide student learning? How can alternative staffing models help meet each student’s needs?

Students and teachers are expected to work together in their advisories to improve academic, social, and emotional growth and to build good habits. A strong team culture combined with small group work and weekly blended learning experiences contributes to a nontraditional approach to teaching and learning. Students and teachers play many roles. Training camp, advisory, and an after school coffee shop provide flexible environments for students to direct their own learning and help their teachers understand how to help them most.



How can we create flexible and real-world learning environments by re-imagining our use of technology, scheduling, and community/home resources?

Leveraging multiple instructional modalities

Large Group Instruction



Small Group Instruction



Small Group Collaboration



Virtual instruction delivered by software



Virtual instruction delivered by remote instructors



Independent learning



Peer tutoring



Baychester Middle School will use 21st century tools and skills to create real world environments like a coffee shop/study lounge and peer tutoring sessions to prepare students to succeed in college and career. Students will meet in small groups, one-on-one conferences, and their advisory to talk about their progress and to help one another on their personal learning plans. Additionally, all scholars will be equipped with an email address, an online calendar/planner, and access to a reflection blog each week. They will learn to type, text, blog, email, create, and present using applicable skills and technology.

The school will provide after school workshops for both students and caregivers on these new resources and how to effectively apply them to academic and real life situations.



Jamal starts the day in his advisory. He checks his email, enters his assignments into his planner, blogs about his scorecard progress, and enter goals into his personalized learning plan. He conferences with a teacher about his progress in a small group based on his goal to be more organized and prepared for school.



Jamal heads to ELA class and chooses an independent reading book based on his latest reading assessment. His teacher uses the Accelerated Reader program to track his reading goals and comprehension. He meets in small guided reading groups to discuss a short story and practices a skill he missed on his last assessment.



In Science, Jamal works on an independent research project on the ecosystem in temperate forests. The teacher is working with a small group of students who struggle with taking relevant notes while he completes a lab on leaf identification. He saves his work in the “portfolio” tab on his flash drive so he can show his parents his progress at conferences.



During training camp, Jamal works with a group of students who are working on double digit multiplication. Some students are doing center work using blended learning programs for Math and ELA on a set of laptops or practicing their typing skills while others are working with a teacher on their research projects.



After school, a group of students meet to work on their math tasks in the school's coffee shop. Jamal grabs a snack and works together with them to complete a rigorous set of tasks that require them to problem solve, write, reflect, and solve using multiple strategies. He also uses this time to do homework and read.

